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Vacancy announcement #: USAID/306/15/29/OPPD

Solicitation is open to: Afghan Nationals Only

Position Title: Project Management Specialist (M&E)

Type of vacancy: Single

Opening date: April 26, 2015

Closing date: May 7, 2015

Work hours: 40 hours (Full time)

Position Grade: FSN-10

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Afghanistan is inviting applications from all interested Afghan Nationals for the position of **Project Management Specialist (Monitoring & Evaluation)** in the Office of Program and Project Development.

BASIC FUNCTION OF THE POSITION:

The Project Management Specialist - Monitoring and Evaluation (PMS-M&E) is housed in the Office of Program and Project Development (OPPD) and serves as a key member of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Unit. The PMS-M&E's main role is to provide expert advice, guidance, and leadership toward the implementation of performance management at USAID/Afghanistan.

Incumbent will increase the knowledge and capacity within the M&E Unit and overall Mission by advising on the set-up of essential M&E systems in line with the Mission's new multi-tiered monitoring approach. Key to his/her role will be supporting the coordination of USAID/Afghanistan's program monitoring, evaluation, assessment, and reporting activities, and strategically linking M&E findings to continuous learning and decision making. The PMS-M&E plays an important quality assurance role, advising technical teams in all sectors on Agency and Mission policies, procedures, and guidelines related to performance management, as well as advising on new systems which foster learning.

USAID/Afghanistan has defined a 10 year Strategy for Transformation to guide its work in the region. The total portfolio is about \$6 billion, covering a complex geographical footprint and programmatic scope. Due to the size and sensitivity of the program, the Mission has a fast-paced, high stress work environment, and handles an inordinately high audit load. USAID is the principal U.S. Government (USG) agency responsible for USG foreign assistance in Afghanistan and the largest USAID program worldwide. Key to the success of the strategy will be evidenced-based approaches, the management of high-level evaluation questions, robust performance indicators that reflect appropriate targets, well-planned baselines and sound data collection and analysis approaches, centered on the Mission's Foreign Assistance Objectives. The PMS-M&E will serve as an advisor in the strategy implementation by facilitating coherence of vision and focus among the technical teams, and linking evidence and results to strategy.

As the international military and civilian presence in the field decreases, concern about the ability to conduct adequate project monitoring is growing. At the same time, expectations to ensure that projects are performing as intended will remain the same or intensify. To be responsive to this changing dynamic and responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars, USAID/Afghanistan developed a multi-tiered monitoring approach to collect and verify information and decision-making. This approach collects and verifies information and data, ensuring that information that is reported to

USAID is sufficient, accurate, and verifiable, which increases the likelihood of project success. The incumbent will play a critical role in implementing this monitoring approach.

The PMS-M&E will provide expertise and technical assistance focusing USAID program outcomes and impact and integrating that information into USID/Afghanistan's monitoring and evaluation systems, programming decisions, and collaboration with partners. Incumbent contributes to the Mission's intellectual leadership by helping to coordinate and implement USAID/Afghanistan's capacity in the following areas: performance monitoring and evaluation, documentation and reporting, and program coordination. The ability to keep Mission senior management up-to-date with all issues that affect project performance is more important than ever, and the incumbent's contribution to ensuring the implementation of the multi-tiered monitoring approach will provide the evidenced-base data on which the leadership can act upon. The PMS-M&E will help to lead the Mission's core monitoring structure and will serve as an Evaluation Point of Contact (EPOC) and a Program Monitoring Point of Contact (PMPOC) for one or more technical offices.

In a complex and rapidly evolving country context, the incumbent's responsibilities include regular contact and collaboration with governmental and non-governmental development professionals in and across multiple ministries, international donors and private-sector entities, Washington level technical staff, and interagency partners; with the end goal of coordinating innovative and responsive USAID programs that attain desired results.

The PMS-M&E is required to exercise extensive judgment in planning and carrying out tasks, in resolving problems and conflicts, and in taking steps necessary to meet deadlines. Incumbent contributes to the management of the overall program team portfolio. Following the completion of the required trainings, the incumbent will perform Contracting Officer Representative (COR) duties, including serving as the technical liaison between the Contracting Officer (CO) and the contractor. This position calls for flexibility, reacting to changing priorities, developing quick, accurate analyses, an ability to work under pressure, and a willingness to assume other job responsibilities for short periods of time due to the absence of staff in the M&E Unit. The PMS-M&E will report to the Monitoring and Evaluation Team Leader in OPPD.

MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This position serves as the technical point of contact for M&E related actions for one or more technical teams, provides performance management guidance, contributes to strategy and project design development, and ensures lessons learned and best practices are shared among the wide community of practice. The position ensures that Mission monitoring and evaluations efforts are properly planned and carried out in a high quality fashion by doing the following:

1. Performance Management Guidance and Learning Systems Development :

Ensure the implementation of the multi-tiered monitoring approach to verify USG resources are being utilized efficiently and appropriately, fill in information gaps and recommend specific improvements for USAID/Afghanistan's monitoring and evaluation systems, and collaborating across the mission to ensure learning and adapting approaches are incorporated into activities:

- Continuously reviews USAID/Afghanistan's monitoring and evaluation status by assessing available information on the Mission's M&E systems, staff capacity, and the linkages of M&E information to decision-making. Provides recommendations on ways to improve M&E capacity and procedures.
- Coordinates closely with technical teams and relevant support offices on the integration of learning approaches into portfolios.
- Advises on and oversees M&E data collection and knowledge management in USAID/Afghanistan to promote better performance management and learning. Explores the feasibility and cost of utilizing technology and innovation in a manner that strengthens the Mission's programmatic monitoring, coordination and evaluation.
- Provides input to the operationalization of the Mission's Performance Management Mission Order, particularly aspects related to Mission systems on effective performance monitoring which are linked to learning.

- Engages other development partners who are addressing similar assistance objectives to promote effective knowledge and data sharing and use of information.
 - Assists the Monitoring and Evaluation Team Leader with responding to periodic data calls, audits, and tasked, as well as responding to ad hoc requests for information related to monitoring and evaluation and program implementation.
2. Serves as an advisor and mentor to USAID/Afghanistan technical team staff in monitoring and evaluation
- Mentors and helps train incoming Mission staff in regards to USAID performance management policies and procedures.
 - Coordinates the regular review of progress towards achieving Development Objectives through program reviews, portfolio reviews, quarterly monitoring implementation reviews, or other processes.
 - Advises and provides technical support to Mission staff to help improve their skills and knowledge in M&E, including information sharing, mentoring, informal training, or workshops.
 - Identifies training needs and opportunities to provide training for Mission staff and/or implementing partner staff on performance monitoring tools, evaluation methodologies, reporting, and lessons learned in activity and program assessment. As needed, facilitates informal M&E trainings and workshops at USAID/Afghanistan.
 - Conducts periodic field visits (when feasible), in collaboration with technical teams, to: monitor the activities of implementing partners; assess data quality; identify and anticipate implementation issues; and work with implementing partners to make the most effective use of available program resources.
3. Proposes, designs, and conducts studies, strategic analyses, performance and impact evaluations related to USAID/Afghanistan projects, programs and strategy using rigorous data collection and analysis methods:
- Analyzes evaluation findings and lessons learned for applicability to mid-course corrections and future programs, and to ensure that these findings are communicated effectively to Mission staff, partners and USAID/Washington. Provides recommendations based on key findings from evaluations and assessments for Mission processes and procedures. Identifies cross-cutting issues and opportunities for coordination and leveraging interventions and results across development objectives.
 - Assists in preparing scopes of work for assessments and evaluations, participates in contractor selection, reviews evaluation reports and coordinates the process of providing written comments on draft reports to evaluators.
 - Provides technical expertise and guidance to technical teams on: Performance Plan and Report; Portfolio Reviews; Project M&E Plan development; Implementing Partner Quarterly and Annual Reports; Performance Management Plan development; and Monitoring Overviews.
4. Serves as an advisor to the Mission by facilitating evidence-based decision-making which links research and results to strategy
- Advises on the identification of and addressing high-level evaluation questions and impact evaluation opportunities, working with the Program Office and the Technical Teams.
 - Assists with the drafting and management of the high-level Mission Performance Management Plan and subsequent layers of Performance Management Plans in collaboration with the Program Office and the Technical Teams.
 - Provides continued analysis and input on the strategy as a living document, further promoting learning and encouraging adaptation of the strategy.
 - Provides advice to the Program Office's senior management regarding monitoring and evaluation issues in order to ensure consistency in approaches across the strategic objectives and to identify the need for special surveys and evaluations.

5. Advises Technical Teams on M&E plans in project and activity designs

- In collaboration with technical team AORs/CORs/Activity Managers/On-budget managers, ensures implementing partner M&E plans contain a performance monitoring framework with clear-cut goals, outcomes, outputs, inputs, processes, indicators, data needs and sources, and reporting formats for effective monitoring.
- Ensures adequate resources are allocated in project and activity designs to conduct robust monitoring and evaluation activities.
- Advises and oversees the warehousing and analysis of monitoring and evaluation data.
- Serves as a member of project design teams for one or more technical sectors, providing expert technical advice on development of: monitoring and evaluation plans, log frames, indicators, baselines, and targets.

6. Program Implementation:

- Serves as a Contracting Officer Representative (COR) for one or more multi-million dollar third-party monitoring contracts, and assumes all the duties and responsibilities that designation entails, including serving as the technical liaison between the Contracting Officer (CO) and the contractor.
- Maintains a Level II Certification by taking continuing learning credits through USAID University or other courses/workshops offered by USAID or other qualifying entities, either in country or regionally.
- Manages, organizes, and maintains all project files, both hard copies and electronic files on the USAID system. This includes timely and efficient data submissions to Afghan Info.
- Participates in all Mission program reviews, data calls, and presentations related to his/her project, ensuring timely submission of deliverables.

QUALIFICATIONS/EVALUATION CRITERIA:

- a. **Education:** The incumbent must have a Bachelor's Degree in international development, international relations, statistical analysis, or other M&E related field. A Master's degree is highly desirable.
- b. **Prior Work Experience:** The position requires a minimum of three years of relevant experience with a proven track record of programmatic accomplishment and professional achievement. Experience with USAID, other USG agencies, international development organizations, or the Government of Afghanistan is highly desirable.

The incumbent must have a demonstrated practical experience in the following areas: the use and maintenance of M&E research systems; development of program related evaluations and statistical analysis; program or project management experience in a developing country context; and development of program indicators, data collection and analysis, and performance reporting.

- c. **Language Proficiency:** Incumbent must have Level IV (Fluent) of English speaking/reading and Level IV (Fluent) in Dari and/or Pashto ability.
- d. **Job Knowledge:** The incumbent must have a thorough knowledge of research, monitoring, and evaluation in international development and be able to advise on monitoring and evaluating development priorities. Exceptional communication and inter-personal skills are critical, and the incumbent must be able to interact with a broad range of internal and external partners. Knowledge of the operating country context is highly desirable.
- e. **Skills and Abilities:** The incumbent must be able to establish, maintain and broaden an extensive range of contacts with technical offices, USAID leadership, key officials of government ministries, non-governmental organizations, private sector entities, and other donor agencies. The incumbent must also have a demonstrated ability to exercise his/her responsibilities and plan and execute work assignments independently, be a skilled communicator, be able to work under pressure and produce high-quality results quickly, and be able to predict issues of concern.

The incumbent must have strong analytical, communication, interpersonal and leadership skills, and the ability to prepare and present factual and interpretative reports covering complex subject matters. The incumbent must be able to function collaboratively and productively as a member of a multi-functional team, and must have the ability to work effectively in a team environment to achieve consensus on policies, activities, and administrative matters. Incumbent must be able to communicate effectively with USAID staff at all levels, technical representatives of beneficiary institutions, and the general public. Incumbent must also be able to communicate effectively and accurately with varying levels within the U.S. Government structure including representatives of other agencies at Post.

The incumbent is required to be able to draft professionally prepared briefing documents, including participation in and leading the drafting of annual technical, programmatic and fiscal reports. The incumbent must also be able to prepare reports, correspondence, and documents in a fully professional and competent manner requiring few or no editorial changes

Excellent command of software programs for e-mail, word processing, spreadsheets, databases, and graphics presentations is a highly desirable.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants are requested to submit a complete application package which must include all required documents to AFPAKjobs@usaid.gov with a **Subject line: (Project Management Specialist (M&E) (OPPD1529)**

ANY/ALL application submissions after the closing date of May 7, 2015 will not be considered.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

1. **Cover memo/email outlining your qualifications and experience against the selection criteria.**
2. **Application for Employment (AE) as a Locally Employed Staff (DS-174)**
http://kabul.usembassy.gov/job_opportunities2.html
<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/136408.pdf> and/or
3. **A current resume or curriculum vitae that provides the same information found on the DS-174 form;**

(We understand that not all applicants are able to download the application from the internet. Please state this in your cover memo/email if this is the case. For candidates who are short listed, a DS 174 will be required in order to advance in the process.)

Note:

- Ø Only short-listed candidates will be notified.
- Ø This vacancy is open only to Afghan Nationals.
- Ø Applications with insufficient information to make a determination will not be considered.
- Ø No in-person appointments or telephone calls will be entertained.
- Ø Female applicants are encouraged to apply.

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ALL ETHNIC GROUPS AND BOTH GENDERS ARE URGED TO APPLY**